THE MINISTER OF RURAL AREAS AND EMPLOYMENT (SHRI KINJARAPPU YERRANNAIDU): (a) to (d) The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

[Translation]

Setting up of Steel Industry in Bihar

424. SHRI VIRENDRA KUMAR SINGH : Will the Minister of STEEL be pleased to state :

(a) whether there is any proposal under consideration of the government to set up steel industry in Bihar; and

(b) if so, the details thereof ?

THE MINISTER OF STEEL AND MINISTER OF MINES (SHRI BIRENDRA PRASAD BAISHYA): (a) Union Government do not propose to set up steel plant in Bihar.

(b) Does not arise in view of (a) above.

[English]

Telephone Bill Arrear

425. SHRI K.P. SINGH DEO : Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state :

(a) the total amount of telephone bill arrear pending for payment by the State Government as on June 30, 1997, State-wise;

(b) the amount due to different Central Ministries including the offices of different Ministers as on June 30, 1997, separately;

(c) whether a number of traders/private individuals are also not paying their arrears;

(d) if so, the details thereof as on June 30, 1997; and

(e) the steps taken to collect these arrears and to stop the misuse of Government telephones ?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI BENI PRASAD VARMA): (a) and (b) The information has been called for and the same will be laid on the Table of the House.

(c) Yes, Sir.

(d) and (e) The information has been called for and the same will be laid on the Table of the House.

[Translation]

Phone Mechanics

426. SHRI DR. BALIRAM : Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state :

(a) whether employees working under Maharashtra circle having qualified the phone-mechanic examination and getting training have not been posted so far;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(c) the time by which the Government are likely to appoint all such employees having qualified employees to the post of phone-mechanic ?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI BENI PRASAD VARMA): (a) Yes, Sir. All are not yet posted as Phone Mechanic.

(b) More number of candidate are trained than the number of posts existing.

(c) The existing posts of Phone Mechanic have already been filled up and the creation of a new post is a continuous process based on workload. The additional posts of Phone Mechanic are sanctioned as and when justified. It would be ensured that these additional posts are created and filled up early.

[English]

Exploration of Minerals by NDMC

427. SHRI SULTAN SALAHUDDIN OWASI : Will the Minister of STEEL be pleased to state :

(a) whether the National Mineral Development Corporation Limited has drawn up plans for exploration of minerals during the Ninth Five Year Plan;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the funds have been sanctioned to the corporation to undertake the exploration work; and

(d) if so, the details thereof ?

THE MINISTER OF STEEL AND MINISTER OF MINES (SHRI BIRENDRA PRASAD BAISHYA): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) National Mineral Development Corporation Limited (NMDC) has applied for prospecting licences for Gold and Diamond in the States of Andhra Pradesh, Madhya